(c) whether rural urban divide has been noticed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) As per data available with the Ministry, the drop out rate at primary stage (classes I-V) of SC, ST and girl students has reduced from 41.5%. 51.4% and 33.7% in 2002-03 to 32.9%, 39.8% and 21.8% respectively in 2005-06.

(c) The rural and urban divide of the drop out rate is not available.

Pension and Gratuity facilities to Navodaya Vidyalaya employees

†173. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to give facilities of pension, gratuity, etc. to Navodaya Vidyalaya employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the details as to the reasons why Government is not able to remove the said anomaly despite specific recommendations of a Parliamentary Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (c) Government of India has approved implementation of the New Pension Scheme of Government of India to all new employees of Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) with an option to the existing employees to continue with the existing CPF scheme or to join the New Pension Scheme. The payment of the gratuity to eligible employees of Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti are being made according to Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti Payment of Gratuity Rule 2007.

Quality of Government schools

174. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ramamurthy Committee had recommended that the quality of all Government schools be enhanced to transform them into genuine neighbourhood schools and simultaneously making private schools freely accessible; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard so that the premise made by the Kothari Commission that the children of the masses are compelled to receive sub-standard education, while economically privileged parents are able to buy good education, could be adequately taken care of in view of substantial funds allocated in the Eleventh Five Year Plan to improve quality of education?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) Yes Sir.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) The Central Government in partnership with the States is implementing the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the Mid-Day Meal Programme and the Teacher Education Programme for universalisation of elementary education and to provide education of satisfactory quality.

Evaluation of Mid-day Meal

175. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government received a report from the CAG in March, 2007, that evaluation of Mid-Day Meal in primary schools has shown continuous fall in quantity of meal, the promised 450 calories as prescribed in revised recipe by Government, is ignored, the objective of minimizing drop-outs from school is not achieved, etc.; and

(b) if so, what remedial measures have been taken to tide over these deficiencies in the existing schools and in the new schools, where the scheme has been introduced during 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) No report from CAG on Mid Day Meal was received by the Government in March, 2007.

Regulation of foreign schools and institutions

176. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to formulate a new policy to regulate foreign schools and institutions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether their course contents would also be regulated, to suit the Indian environment; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) A committee consisting of representatives of Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Association of Indian Universities (AIU), Council of Board of School Education (COBSE), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and eminent educationists, was constituted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in February, 2006 to suggest a policy, *inter-alia*, regarding setting up of schools affiliated to foreign boards in India and appointment of foreign teachers in such schools. The recommendations of the Committee, *inter-alia*, relate to designation of a school as "International" school, affiliation to foreign Boards, appointment of foreign teachers and matter relating to curriculum. The recommendations are under consideration of the Government.